(c) These exchanges are likely to be commissioned progressively by 31-3-1995.

Telecommunication Project in Gujarat

5384. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the Newsitem appeared in the "Hindu" dated the 28th March, 1994 regarding Telecommunication Project in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the name of the place in the State where the proposed project is to be set up; and

(d) by what time the project is likely to be completed and would start functioning ?

THE MINISTER OF THE STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) to (d) No such Newsitem has come to the notice of the Department so far, however, the details are being ascertained from the field unit and will be placed on the Table of the House as soon as available.

Speed Post Corporation

5385. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to form a Speed Post Corporation;

(b) if so, whether Government consider making Hyderabad the hub and centre of this Corporation; and

(c) if not, the reasons for ignoring the central location of Hyderabad.?

THE MINISTER OF SATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) There is no such proposal at present.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

Promotions for Telephone Operators

5386. SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Delhi Telephones, now Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., had formulated a policy for Telephone Operators to give them first and second promotions on completing 10 and 18 years of service respectively in the case of Scheduled Castes and 16 and 26 years respectively in the case of general category employees;

(b) if so, whether Government had set up any monitoring group to ensure implementation of the above policy;

(c) whether the MTNL has been strictly following the above policy of promotion;

(d) if so, the number of Telephone Operators belonging to Scheduled Castes, promoted during last three years; and

(e) if not, the reasons for not implementing the above policy ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) No sir, there is no separate policy in Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd., (MTNL) for giving promotion to Telephone Operators. Policies of Deptt. of Telecom. for promotion to Telephone Operators are applicable to MTNL staff also. The Department of Telecom's policy envisages that first promotion is considered to Telephone Operators on completion of 16 years of service and second promotion is considered on completion of 26 years of service. If sufficient number of SC/ST candidates are not available as per statutory requirements, then to the extent of short-fall, SC/ST candidates are considered in the order of their seniority provided they have put in minimum 10 years of service for first promotion and minimum 17 years of service for second promotion.

(b) The policy as indicated in answer to (a) above is being monitored by the Government.

(c) The policy as indicated in answer to (a) above is being strictly followed in MTNL.

(d) 104 Scheduled Castes Telephone Operators have been promoted during the last three years.